

ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Hamlet

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BIRTH CONTROL

By F. MILTON WILLIS

Anent the growing interest in birth-control, it may be helpful to consider the matter from the point of view of Occultism, the science of the inner side of existence.

First, Occultism teaches that a human birth is not the coming into life of a new soul, a new being, but is the return of one that has been in a human physical body many times before. Secondly, it teaches that no new human souls to occupy human bodies are now created; namely, that the door from the animal kingdom to the human has been closed for the humanity to which we belong, and is not to be reopened until far in the future. This means, of course, that the number of human beings in existence in the world-school comprising the Earth and its superphysical counterparts, the astral and mental worlds, is fixed.

It teaches further that races of mankind are like grades in a school; the dwellers in the wilderness, savages, corresponding to the children in kindergartens; those among the slums of the cities or in semi-civilized communities or migratory bands, to pupils in the primary grades; and so on up to a group of perfect and nearly perfect men, Great Adepts and Initiates, who correspond to the faculty of the university, and who have charge of the education, or evolution, of all beings below them.

As evolution is continually in progress, it follows that the hosts of the civilized are being constantly recruited from the hosts of the savage and the semi-savage; for by being born in touch with the civilized do these younger human brothers begin to learn the higher lessons of life. Unable at first to orient themselves to the complications of their new abode, they transgress civil and moral laws, are called criminals and subjected by most of the states of to-day to senseless punishment rather than rational training under physical restraint. Now it is these child-souls taking their first lessons in contact with civilization, that come numerous into the very families toward which much of the effort of advocates of birth-control is directed; and it is obvious that if the doors be closed to them by the practice of contraception, they will be born again in their old habitat, the wilderness somewhere, kept in the lower grades though ready to pass on—or (and this is a tragic matter) will be led to take birth in the families of the rich, and as scapegrace sons or incorrigible daughters, will keep coals of fire upon the heads and hearts of their parents; in the families of the rich—because there they will be likely to be given a chance to develop their better qualities through educational facilities af-

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ANTI-REINCARNATION ARGUMENTS

2. How can reincarnation possibly be proved? Can anyone really remember being here before, and if they think they can, how can you possibly prove they are not hallucinated or the victims of self-deception?

Reincarnation is a metaphysical concept. Metaphysical means beyond the physical. How can any superphysical concept be proved directly by physical demonstration? The existence of God is a necessary hypothesis to the existence of the Universe. Somebody or something must have given rise to it. Yet physical proof of God, such as atheistic thinkers demand, is obviously impossible. But neither is it possible to prove by physical evidence that there is no God. The Atheist is no more consistent in this regard than the believer. The Agnostic, who neither affirms or denies, is very proud of what he conceives to be the most scientific attitude of all. Yet, if we may risk the avalanche of recrimination likely to descend on us for the assertion, it seems to us to be the solution of a lazy mind. Not always, perhaps. Ingersoll is classed as an Agnostic, and yet we wonder . . . There is evidence in his magnificent speeches and writings that at bottom he had a profound concept of a Supreme Intelligence, very much akin to that held by the occultist. His quarrel was with the cheap two-by-four deity believed in by most of his contemporaries—the vicious little doler out of divine pains and penalties who damned unbaptized children and sent billions to hell and half-dozens to heaven.

There are those who claim to remember past lives, but the teaching of reincarnation has no need to appeal to their testimony as proof. Maybe, indeed, it is sometimes delusion, even downright misrepresentation for "spotlight" purposes. Well-authenticated evidence does exist that such statements have been checked by the familiarity of the person (often a child) making the claim, with localities he had never visited. Reincarnation, however, is too grand a concept to have to rely on such "small time" proofs. It stands or falls by its inherent reasonableness—because it fits the facts—all the facts—of life and is contradicted by none.

As well ask the skeptic if he can prove his confidently held annihilation theory—can he? Has anyone ever returned from the grave and assured a waiting world that the real truth of the beyond is annihilation—that he knows, because that's what happened to him? Stupid reasoning, of course, but no more stupid than the insistence that reincarnation must be proved by someone remembering his past lives, and then allowing

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THE OCCULT STUDY OF DISEASE

Part I.—Clairvoyant Research

By GEOFFREY HODSON

[Continued from last month]

So much for the instrument of research. Let us now proceed to consider some results of its employment by man.

The first thing which the observer discovers when he plunges into occult research, into the departments or aspects of human consciousness and of Nature, is the existence of an inviolable law within the limits of which he is held irrevocably, and from which he can find no escape.

This is the eternal law of adjustment, which keeps the whole universe perfectly balanced and in tune. It is called in eastern books and in Theosophical literature, the law of *karma*. This Sanscrit word means "action" and refers to the action of the law of readjustment, the law of cause and effect, the great law which is referred to in the Bible in the words: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is the one fundamental law in nature, from which all other laws are derived.

Man in the early days of his evolution is ignorant of the existence of this law, with the result that, using the measure of self-will which he has been granted, he breaks himself against it. He violates it and receives the inevitable reaction. Nature asserts Her eternal harmony and the transgressor experiences in his own person the effects of Her self-adjustment. The result is pain, and pain may be regarded as the voice of Nature telling us that we have transgressed Her laws. In spite of Her guidance, we still go on in our attempted transgression, obtaining a little fleeting pleasure from the indulgence but reaping a great deal more pain from the reaction; until at last the man, the Ego, the spiritual man, watching this process from above, as it were, realizes that a certain line of conduct down here produces a certain painful result. This mode of life does not pay and eventually man learns to use his will in accordance with the law. In the end his will is still free, but it is naturally turned to righteousness. That is the goal of human evolution.

We are concerned in our present study with the process rather than with the goal, with the method rather than the result.

Disease is not cruel; pain is not an arch enemy; it is a friend. We should not shrink from pain. We should study it and find the lesson it has to teach, for every pain has a lesson to teach. Every pain means a transgression, and the transgression means

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SPIRITUAL SCALPS

There is a tremendous difference between the underlying reasons existing for the occultist's desire to give out the truths it has seen his good karma to discern, and the desire of the orthodox sectarian to proselytize. The latter takes the position that those who do not believe as he does are at worst doomed, at best relegated to an inferior position in heaven. The latter he will only grudgingly concede. He really doesn't want to speak of that possibility at all—it spoils his selling talk. Hell is so much more crisp and crackling. One can get one's teeth into that concept. What to do with the unbeliever who is so obtuse as to reject the believer's lovable tenets of eternal life or eternal damnation?—Give him hell. And if he is at last scared into thinking your way or, with chattering teeth, at least says that he does, chalk up one more spiritual scalp on your side.

The occultist possesses no celestial gun into which he cuts a notch every time he brings down another skeptic. He does not, like his missionary minded brother, stalk around with his belt full of the spiritual calps he has unloosed from the craniums of the infidel. His heavenly costume jewelry will not be decorated with a gem for each darkened mind he has turned into an oasis of light. He has knowledge to impart—knowledge beyond all price. It has brought into his own life peace, understanding, happiness, purposefulness. Something within him impels him to offer it to others. They may not take it, these others, but he has done his duty. And some of them will take it, if he uses intelligence and judgment in his presentation.

The occultist may rejoice at his "successes," he will, but he will not sorrow over his failures." If he has really done his best, where occasion seemed to point to a possible receptive mind, he has done all that is expected of him. But if he fumbles his approach, let him beware of blaming his unexpressed "prospect" for lack of interest. It is no sin that he has failed, but it may be a blunder—or it may not. Perhaps he did his best—but perhaps he did not. The smug assumption that it is always the public's fault that Theosophy does not make further headway is one of the reasons why Theosophy has not made more headway. There is a science of propaganda, and it cannot be ignored by Theosophists any more than it

can be ignored by nations. The cause of the Democracies is just, but every legitimate method of publicity is being employed, and quite rightly, to convince the world of that fact.

Theosophy is the grandest philosophy known to man, but if it is known to only a tiny fraction of the human race, and they keep the knowledge to themselves or present it unattractively, it will be edged out by inferior philosophies more vociferously and attractively offered.

And that is just what has happened. Why does Christian Science number its millions and New Thought its hundreds of thousands in this country alone, while the Theosophical Society cannot muster in its ranks a scant 3200? Is Christian Science really a thousand times as attractive to the public as Theosophy? It started in the same year as the Theosophical Society—1875? Yes, we know the old threadbare excuse—it offers health and wealth, while Theosophy is concerned with spiritual progress only. We have heard that line *ad nauseam*, and all that is wrong with it is that it doesn't happen to be true. Any enlightened "Scientist" will insist that his faith is primarily interested in the spiritual realization of its devotees—the material satisfactions are mere side issues—they follow as a matter of course. And the authority of Scripture will be appealed to for confirmation: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you."

It were well if Theosophists would not affect (some of them) such lofty unconcern about the material side of living—at least when trying to fan into a flame the spark of interest manifested by some promising student. A poverty-stricken Theosophist or Theosophical Lodge may not necessarily be able to do more useful or spiritually acceptable work than one not so afflicted. Sometimes the mere business of existing uses up so much energy that hardly any is left for helpful purposes.

The end of the whole matter, it would seem, is that each of our little band must give out the truth that is within him wherever and whenever he feels, *after real thought on the subject*, it may fall on fertile soil. Then he must clothe it in the freshest, brightest raiment it is within his power to conjure up. He must not garb it in rags—must not surround it with an aura so otherworldly that it frightens away all but those who already are so close to Liberation that they hardly need it. In other words, Brethren, let us use as much common sense in our Theosophical contacts as in our business and social contacts. Theosophy deserves that much of us. And if this rule had always been applied by those who have earnestly striven to bring others to the truth, our numbers today would be really representative of the world-wide importance of the teaching it is our privilege to offer.

TRUTH: DEFINED BY PATIENCE WORTH

Oh me! What a misused wench she be!
Tattered, bawdied, mired, cuffed, throttled;
Worn, flung down, ta'en up again,
Yet always the same.

**"BAD" ASPECTS—
A NEW CONCEPT**

In spite of assurance from all theosophical astrologers, such as the great Alan Leo and others, students of astrology are prone to dread the squares, oppositions and malefic conjunctions and parallels. They look forward eagerly to the time when trines, sextiles and other benefic configurations will supplant these hard taskmasters. They pray that the "evil" directions may pass, leaving them unharmed.

Yet as every informed astrologer knows, the so-called prosperous periods too often enervate the character, particularly in a weak horoscope. Things come easy and frequently go easy. What is worse, the native takes it easy, and the end of the benefic cycle finds him quite incapable of coping with the adverse period, which in most horoscopes follows with the inevitability of night after day.

Many teachers stress the right attitude toward inharmonious aspects as being a powerful use of the mind to overcome them; of prayer for strength to mitigate them; of meditation for patience and resignation.

With high respect for the sincerity of these counsels we beg to offer a different concept of the value of what the Eastern schools call the "Strong Aspects." The cycles they dominate are periods of sowing. The cycles ruled over by the favoring configurations are those of reaping and of storing away for the next lean period. The Bible story of Joseph, who took advantage of the seven years of plenty to prepare for the seven years of famine, is in part an exemplification of this.

Character is moulded by difficulty. Our prayer should be to use the trouble, whatever it may be, to advance, not to retrograde. There is an answer in Nature to every situation, no matter how perplexing. The answer is stored away deep in the being. It can be dug out and used. The implement to bring it to light is believing thought. We can if we think we can. Our world reacts to us as we believe it will react—as we believe subconsciously, down in the heart, not as we say we believe in our conscious mind.

We do not need to solicit trouble. There is enough available without going out to look for it. But we are not to dodge it—we cannot dodge it. We can only meet it and we are expected to meet it. There is a way to meet it—a right way. If hard thinking does not show us the way, the inspiration that always follows on hard thinking will.

This is not a lazy man's universe. Nature exacts a heavy price for living in it. And she always gets paid. There are no deadbeats in her scheme. Nature has a chattel mortgage on everything we are, everything we own. It is no trick at all for her to foreclose, if her terms are not met. The foreclosure periods are those of our limitation. She takes away something because we have not paid for it. But she doesn't sell it and tax us with a deficiency judgment. She holds it in escrow for us and we can have it back—if we really want it—when we have paid off our delinquency. And then, quite likely, we find we don't want

it—and Nature will hand us something much better than what she took away.

Nature or karma—they are both the same—wants us to look at the troubles she sends us—or that we manufacture for ourselves, which is nearer the truth—*objectively*. She wants us to regard them without the emotion most people bring to bear on their difficulties. No one can reason wisely or well in the throes of emotion. In addition to the material side of the trouble on which we may bring our intellect to bear, there is an inner side. We may see the fool blunder which brought this penalty upon us—or we may not. Sometimes we can't—it goes back too far—maybe half-a-dozen lives. The ego knows all about it and does regard it *objectively*. He can't regard it any other way, being an Ego, with no emotional body on his own plane. He knows why it happened. He relates cause to effect. He knows how it should be solved. He knows all the answers, the Ego. Of if he doesn't, he can draw upon the wisdom of his Monad, who, being eternal and divine, does know them.

The personality, floundering pitifully in the mire of circumstance, can identify himself with these higher parts of himself. He can acquire their points of view, their wisdom, their understanding—at least in a measure sufficient to solve his own problems.

It is human to try to sidestep trouble. Even Jesus prayed "that this cup may be taken away from me." But he quickly added "If not, thy will be done."

We are here by our own choice—by choice of the Monad, our ultimate Self. No man may live his full life without being subject to the buffets of circumstance. But the buffets are part of what life has to give and we have to take. We can take them stupidly, resentfully—trying all the time to run from them, to get out of their way. Or we can stand up to them, regard them as an interesting and valuable experience from which we expect greatly to profit. Strange as it may seem these "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" appear to lose all interest in hurting us when we stand up to them in that way. Like a vicious dog which will bite only one who shows fear of him, these malignant dealers out of punishment are so only to those who are afraid. To others they are beneficent, opening up new vistas of character and accomplishment.

Such a concept of "bad aspects" takes all the sting out of them, leaving one indifferent as to whether his aspects favor him or apparently harm him. For he knows the "bad" are as necessary as the good, and that he may use both for the enrichment and glorification of his life.

Why has Theosophy been allowed to become synonymous in the public mind with Spiritualism, phenomena, freakishness of outlook and other strange concepts? Actually it is a philosophy so sane, logical and elevated above all others, that the greatest intellects have not disdained its acceptance. Inferior propaganda methods must be responsible. Never has a movement been so misrepresented. Shall we accept this as part of the natural order of things? If so, we deserve our fate.

SANITY IN ART

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

A thing that looks like a Camembert cheese,
Encased in some strawberry jam,
Surmounted by gorgeous aluminum trees
And an orange and lavender clam!
The gallery visitors stand and admire,
And murmur, "How perfectly splendid!"
But all I can do is to gasp and perspire,
And wonder what could be intended.

A girl with three monstrous, misshapen arms
And an oversize violet nose,
A blue hare-lip to add to her charms
And some wonderful clothes-peg toes!
"Such expression!" I heard a lady remark,
"It grows on you—don't you agree?"
But I thought, as I looked at those features stark,
That I'd hate them to grow upon me.

A scalpel and three or four musical notes,
A finger, two thumbs and a pen,
A dishpan containing some blood-colored oats
For a horse that looks more like a hen!
Yet the ladies and gentlemen, art critics all,
Say the *motif* is splendidly logical.
If they asked my opinion, it's something I'd call
The work of a mind pathological.

We are told that these crazy productions contrive
To express what is hardly expressible;
That the artist feels something within him alive,
Out it comes—it is quite irrepressible.
Well perhaps that is true and we want to be kind
But we're certain of one thing, dear Sister:
When you analyze what has come out,
you will find
That it isn't his soul—it's a blister.

The Universal Brotherhood of man, suggests a correspondent, is subjected to a terrific strain by this war. Not any more so than usual, we think. If through this war three hundred million inhabitants of India gain their freedom—if North and South America are drawn into closer bonds of sympathy, if the British understand us better and we the British, and lastly if the oppressed millions in Germany and the conquered countries are liberated from their chains, the cause of Universal Brotherhood will have been advanced, not retarded by this war.

If only the day could laugh,
Laugh till its lean sides clattered,
Till its hungry tongue lolled,
Till its sage brow wrinkled,
Till its hungry belly ached,
Till it forgot to crave wisdom
And learned to learn thereby.

—Patience Worth.

NO RESULTS

In reproducing the following from the Adyar Theosophist for January, it is not intended to adopt any offensive "we told you so" attitude. As this paragraph was written by the National President of The Theosophical Society in America, it does, however, constitute the most striking evidence yet produced of the correctness of our oft-stated position that the general public cannot be interested in Theosophy openly labeled as such.

The item in question reads as follows:

"An interesting experiment has just been conducted in the United States to determine whether newspaper advertising could be used to arouse the interest of readers in the principles of Theosophy. About two thousand rupees (\$1,000) were spent for a series of advertisements in small town newspapers and in one widely distributed weekly (Circulation 5,600,000). The advertising was designed to attract various types of people from the self-seeking to the idealistic. Relatively few responses were received, and although these were followed up with specially prepared letters and high-grade literature nothing whatever in the way of tangible results can be traced to the experiment."

\$1,000 is not a small sum to spend in testing public reaction and it is evident that no pains were spared to obtain results if results were obtainable. That absolutely no results followed is highly significant.

We have insisted for years that this is not the way to spread Theosophy, and have cited numerous examples of the success attending the use of other and more subtle methods. These methods have brought into the Society some of its finest workers. This is no mere assertion—we have the proof ready to hand if challenged. Yet our suggestions have either been ignored or scoffed at. We are probably foolish to continue to make them. But as we think it is our duty to do so regardless of how they are received, we intend to keep hammering away.

The article concludes "... we have at least discovered that so far there is no substitute for the proven method of presenting Theosophy through the lives and works of members." We heartily agree; with the qualification that the works must be such as to appeal to the public instead of leaving it untouched and indifferent.

The irony of the situation is that this terrifically difficult problem, around which such solemn and costly experiments are continually taking place, was solved by one Lodge years ago. Its experience has been freely offered, and rejected without thanks, through Dr. Arundale himself emphasized in the Adyar Theosophist, over three years ago, the effectiveness of its methods, even suggesting that other Lodges send delegates to study them. The suggestion, though made by the International President, has never received the slightest official recognition.

So let's go on pretending that this "insoluble problem" must be with us always, if that is the way it must be done. Those who are interested, however, in the methods

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NATURE'S BOOK OF REVELATION

By ALVIN BOYD KUHN, Ph. D.

[Continued from Last Month]

The world of physical forces presents another strange picturization of this same rationale. It is the waterspout of the Indian Ocean. Its peculiar activity writes an illuminating paragraph on cosmic method for our edification. Nowhere more graphically could the interplay of heavenly and earthly forces be evident. The primal source of the energy at work is of course the sun, but in the operation of the phenomenon under consideration it is the conjunctive interaction of the powers exerted both in the sky and the earth's surface that lends significance to the event. The forces in the upper air over the sea or the desert could not be generated and set to their turbulent work if the solar rays were not reflected from the earth or sea surface to heat up the areas of air far above. The vast extent of heated air that then rises by convection causes at last a great vortex or swirl in the upper atmosphere, which creates a vacuum of such proportions that the suction finally pulls up from below a corresponding column of whirling air, with a vortical core of great pressure. The point for the analogy is that a pull generated in the air above by refraction of the sun's rays from the earth reaches down and lifts up and makes connection with itself at a central meeting point a similar cone of pressure above the ground or water, and with the additional interesting and pertinent fact that the lower cone is inverted in relation to the upper, the two meeting at the waist and forming a figure like the neck of an hour-glass. All this makes a vivid picture of cosmic truth, for in every evolutionary system the energy in play is the composite resultant of two forces, one from above reaching down and blending with another drawn up by it from below. What a flood of new significance wells up in the mind now in connection with Jesus' statement that "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me!" Clearly it can be seen that man and the god within him must work in conjunction and establish a reciprocity of influence between them. We let the reader draw his own inference from the fact that the body of heated air over the earth could not draw up to union with it the lower funnel of pressure unless it had itself first been raised in temperature and in position by the action of the sun's rays on the earth's surface. And the fact that the generating power back of the entire phenomenon originates from the great sun overhead certifies the great theological truth that in the first instance all power cometh from God, the supreme light of all lights. Yet it must be seen also—and this is the important part of the analogy for humans—that that the rays of that almighty prowess do not produce phenomena affecting mortal life on earth until they react upon the material sphere itself and, flying part way back to heaven, set up a joint relationship with the elements and conditions found here below. Always heaven and earth must interact—the great message of truth imparted to the world by ancient Egypt.

Science has latterly discovered the very significant fact that growth of vegetable structure on the ground is by no means simply engineered in nature's workshop by the incidence of sunlight on the plant leaf. It is found that the action of the sun's rays releases only the carbon compounds in the soil which it is essential for the plant to appropriate, while the action of another current of energy is found necessary to release the nitrogen element that is equally a requisite for chlorophyll formation. This newly discovered agent in growth is a ray of extraordinary potency that is released only by energetic catalysis of the lightning flash in thunder storms. It requires the combined action of sun ray and lightning flash to cover the earth with verdure. The new ray discharged by the lightning flash has been called by the scientists who discovered it the "thunderbolt ray." It is one of the multiple forms or types of cosmic emanative power and bespeaks for our minds the great truth that earth would remain unproductive but for the bombardment by forces from the empyrean above. If it is objected that there are not enough thunderstorms to furnish this energization constantly, and none at all at many places for long periods, the rebuttal is that there are some two thousand such storms taking place about this old world at any given time, or all the time! Their nitrogen releasing power is disseminated generally throughout the earth's atmosphere, so that the influence need not be immediate and local.

What does this report to intelligence but that our daily life on earth, with higher and lower elements combined in our nature, must, if it is to be made fecund for beautiful growth, be impacted by influences from a more exalted radiation of cosmic spiritual fire?

As there is an interplay and struggle between upper and lower nodes of being in all living forms, the opposition sometimes takes the form of conflict between inner life and outer frame. In fact "inner" generally coincides with "higher" and "outer" with "lower," though care must be taken constantly to regard these terms in a relative sense. This relation is vividly seen in the combat between the bark or outer integument of the tree and the life force working within. Here is an epitome of all struggle, and its implications are of particular value as a clue to the study of the operation of the radical and the conservative forces in society. As one looks at the gnarled and furrowed trunk of an older tree the mind should be impressed with the greatest of all lessons for "practical" utility. Those corrugations and furrows on the tree's bark tell a story of great moment. They were produced by a long series of successive—and successful—"revolutions" in the course of the tree's growth. Life is ever an energy emanating from within and building outward. It builds by precipitating its more fluid streams of energy outward and letting them cool and harden into concrete substantial forms. The force and character of the flow give determinate shape and nature to the constitution that is to result from the crystallization of sheer energy into concreteness. This deposit in structure is a grand achieve-

ment of life, for its purpose is to build organic instruments wherethrough to express its potential genius. But no sooner is an instrumental structure formed than it begins to harden; it becomes fixed and rigid. From an instrument it soon changes to a prison. Though it is designed to give play to energies and does this capably, it at the same time restricts that play to certain prescribed limitations. While it remains plastic it is adaptable and conformable; it could give channel to fresh impulse. But as it slowly crystallizes into rigidity, it refuses to afford room and scope for later currents of renewed building force. The struggle is on. Life continues to push out from within and strives to build new forms for its accommodation. It fights against its limitation by the incrustations of former structures. Its energies will not be denied. They burst irrepressibly through a stolid ring of imprisonment, breaching the outer wall and making room to expand. The great calamity would be that life could never break its own self-created bonds. And the moral is simply told: an ultra-conservative and unyielding attitude or position is never justifiable. Outward forms and institutions must be kept plastic enough to afford the spirit room to build ever new houses for its occupancy. *To tie the spirit down to an unchanging routine is always anti-revolutionary.* As Heraclitus pointed out and Plato verified, the law of life is change, and change according to a plan conceived in Divine Mind. If this is not the supreme lesson for both the individual human and the nations of the earth, and their governments to learn and apply with wisdom, it would be hard to think what would be a more important one.

The operation of the tree bursting its outer covering also conveys the teaching that life—even human life—is not to be limited to one single incarnation in fleshly body. Inasmuch as eventually the organic instrument of expression loses its plasticity and ceases to become adequately adaptable to the needs of the still expanding life force, the latter must in time be released entirely from a bond that has turned into an imprisonment, so as, after a rest, to take up the line of growth in a new and more highly plastic vehicle. Only thus can the indwelling soul which treasures up the values deposited in it by each succeeding contact with the outer world find opportunity to build for itself, as Oliver Wendell Holmes so beautifully phrased it, "more stately mansions" in which to carry on its continuing lives of adventure into higher freedom. Life is a trinity of three aspects, the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer. For it must destroy its outward material forms to preserve the inner essence, so as to build again.

[To Be Continued]

Not one word of censure or criticism of the German people has ever appeared in ANCIENT WISDOM's columns. Hitler's war is more against them than even against the rest of the world. They have as much to gain, perhaps more, by his downfall than the rest of the world. Millions of them must be praying for it. For millions in Germany still pray.

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. ROGERS

The Failing Plutocracy

When we were at war with Germany twenty-five years ago President Wilson drew a very clear distinction between the German government and the German people. The first we would defeat, the other we would rescue and assist. He also said that nations must in the future be governed by the same high code of honor that we demand of individuals.

That distinction between the people of a country and the government of a country exists in most of the nations of the earth. They are not only not identical but they are often far apart in ideals and objectives. In every nation an aristocracy of wealth grows up as civilization becomes more complex, and it exerts a powerful influence upon the representatives of the people—the men who make the laws—and often fully controls many of them. Thus a plutocracy of wealth and power comes into existence and constitutes a sort of invisible government that molds national policies. It is a very different thing from the masses of the people and it sometimes takes a course in human affairs that the vast majority of the people of that nation would sternly reject if they only had the opportunity. But that plutocracy is slowly losing its power and fading away.

A case in point is the situation in India, with Sir Stafford Cripps trying to induce the leaders in that country to accept the offer of dominion status after the war is over. Had there been no plutocratic influence back of the British government, had the views of the English masses determined the matter, dominion status would have been accomplished years ago and there would now be millions of young Indians ready to leap into the fight for universal human liberty. When we look back upon the past of military rule in India, the atrocity of bloody General Dyer in even the recent past, we cannot blame the Indians for their present attitude. But that hesitation may prolong the war greatly and cost millions more of lives. There will probably be much criticism of England in the United States on account of the present *impasse* but in all fairness we must remember that the culprit is not the English people but the English plutocracy, which draws its wealth largely from India and can be shaken off only by compulsion of some kind. That shaking off will certainly come in some manner during this war. Meantime it would be as unfair to hold the English people responsible as to hold the American people responsible for the delays caused in war production by a few of our plutocrats, who have gone to Washington to work for a dollar a year while drawing great salaries from their companies and using their opportunity to lobby for their special interests.

The Forty Hour Week

In the present state of affairs, with Japan in possession of nearly the entire East Indies and about to invade India, and the almost daily sinking of United Nations ships in the Atlantic, while both Australia and Russia are calling frantically for planes and guns, it is utterly absurd that there should be any attempt to restrict the hours of labor for anybody in the United States. The fear that a working week of forty hours, or less, suitable to times of peace, might be imperiled by disregarding it in time of war is not well founded. Economic conditions forced us to a reasonably short week and will do so again when peace is restored, regardless of legislation. Nor is there any force in the argument that the longer working week would be detrimental to health. Many of us can well remember the time when the ten hour day, six days a week, was general in the United States, while in the steel industry it was 12 hours a day. About 1890 marked the feeble first efforts to establish the eight hour day in the printing trades. Long after that nearly the whole of the labor world was working sixty hours a week, with a portion of it at 72 hours a week. It is not difficult today to find many a business man voluntarily working twelve or more hours a day, and often seven days a week. In Oriental countries there is no Sunday rest day. The stores, shops and factories are open and busy regardless Sunday and they are just as healthy as we are. It's all a matter of what people are accustomed to.

As civilization evolves people should, and will, give less and less time to labor and more and more time to mental and moral development; and regardless of all legislation that is what will inevitably come about when peace is again restored. But in this world crisis, when our brothers and sons are fighting day and night against almost overwhelming odds, is not the time to be too much concerned about the number of hours a day that we safely labor to furnish them the desperately needed arms.

A reader takes us to task for our "pungent paragraphs." Sorry, Sister, but at least they aroused you to the point of writing in about them. And we doubt that the sugary, "What-a-beautiful world," space fillers with which some other publications abound, would ever do that. Our paragraphs are hopefully intended to cause thought on the subjects with which some of them critically deal. Don't be angry with us—we are following our editorial dharma as we see it. Be angry, if you will, about the conditions and do your bit, insofar as you can, to remedy them.

"The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and to many whose lives have been dislocated or ruined by the war their personal rehabilitation means much more than the outcome of the war. A shocking example of human littleness, no doubt, but not so shocking as the tremendous and unconscionable profits made in some war industries.

SUICIDE

By F. MILTON WILLIS

[Continued from Last Month]

In the strong and significant words of one of the world's greatest occultists and teachers of the Sacred Occultism, one to whom untold thousands owe gratitude:

"The atmosphere of the lowest region of the astral world is gloomy, heavy, dreary, depressing to an inconceivable extent. It seems to reek with all the influences most inimical to good, as in truth it does, being caused by the persons whose evil passions have led them to this dreary place. All the desires and feelings at which we shudder, find here the materials for their expression; it is, in fact, the lowest slum, with all the horrors veiled from physical sight parading in their naked hideousness. Its repulsiveness is much increased by the fact that in the astral world character expresses itself in form, and the man who is full of evil passions *looks* the whole of them; bestial appetites shape the astral body into bestial forms, and repulsively human animal shapes are the appropriate clothing of brutalised human souls. No man can be hypocrite in the astral world, and cloak foul thoughts with a veil of virtuous seeming; whatever a man is, that he appears to be in outward form and semblance, radiant in beauty if his mind be noble, repulsive in hideousness if his nature be foul. Even in the physical world a degraded and besotted ruffian moulds his face into a most repellent aspect; what then can be expected when the plastic astral material takes shape with every impulse of his low desires, but that such a man should wear a horrifying form, taking on changing elements of hideousness?

"For it must be remembered that the population of this lowest region consists of the very scum of humanity, murderers, ruffians, violent criminals of all types, drunkards, profligates, the vilest of mankind. None is here, with consciousness awake to its surroundings, save those guilty of brutal crimes, or of deliberate persistent cruelty, or possessed by some vile appetite. The only persons who may be of a better general type, and yet for a while he held here, *are suicides*

"Save for the gloomy surroundings and the loathsomeness of a man's associates, every man here is the immediate creator of his own miseries. Unchanged, except for the loss of the bodily veil, men here show out their passions in all their native hideousness, their naked brutality; full of fierce unsatiated appetites, seething with revenge, hatred, longings after physical indulgences which the loss of physical organs incapacitates them from enjoying, they roam, raging and ravaging, through this gloomy region, crowding round all foul resorts on Earth, round brothels and gin palaces, stimulating their occupants to deeds of shame and violence, seeking opportunities to obsess them, and so to drive them into worse excesses.

[To Be Continued]

THE SECRET DOCTRINE SIMPLY EXPLAINED

34.—Breathing Darkness

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

The vibration swept along, touching with its swift wing simultaneously the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness, the darkness that breathes (moves) over the slumbering waters of life.

We are beginning to recognize the kinship of the Stanzas of Dzyan with the Genesis account of Creation. Thousands of years removed in time and thousands of miles in space, the two narratives are seen to be blood brothers. "... darkness was upon the face of the deep," says Genesis, and "the germ that dwelleth in the darkness," is the Dzyanic counterpart of this mighty description. "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," of Genesis is almost a paraphrase of Dzyan's "the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life."

Madame Blavatsky takes note of the striking similarity. "The idea of the 'Breath' of Darkness moving over the 'slumbering Waters of Life,' which is Primordial Matter with the latent Spirit in it, recalls" she comments "the first chapter of *Genesis*."

Darkness has always been a profound occult symbol, very difficult of comprehension to the uninitiated. Absolute Darkness and Absolute Light are said to be the same thing. Yet neither is the darkness or light of our physical universe. The esoteric instructors deal in such paradoxes. Thus the Buddha would vouchsafe no answer to the question whether the Absolute was conscious or unconscious. The most that could be obtained from him on the subject was that both concepts were erroneous. How this can be no human mind can conceive. Yet students who manifest impatience with such "evasions" should pause to reflect that an Absolute whose nature could be readily expressed in language would not be much of an Absolute. To understand the Absolute one would have to be the Absolute, and while, metaphysically speaking, each of us is truly a manifestation of That, we are at a lowly level at present, which shuts us out from understanding of the deepest Cosmic Mysteries.

It is said, indeed, that the most exalted of the Masters, themselves are barred from that vast and greatest of spiritual secrets, and that wisely they do not speculate upon it. Enough to know that IT IS.

Intellectually and intuitively we must be content to apprehend that the Spirit of all that is had no beginning, will have no ending, was never produced but produces all things, has no form, no limitations; yet all forms, all limitations, emanate from It while remaining in It.

Never was the futility of speculation on the ultimate better expressed than in the words of Patience Worth who, in the Lodge room of The Theosophical Society of St. Louis, on January 11th, 1927, delivered herself of this gem:

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS

Charles E. Luntz recently gave an after-luncheon talk by invitation, to the Executives' Club, a group of top-ranking St. Louis business men. The subject of his address was, "The Zodiac: Your Twelve Stop-and-Go-Signs," a lecture which has been given in many Theosophical Lodges through the country.

It is pleasant to relate that members of the Club were later observed at lectures on "Straight Theosophy" at the Lodge. Mr. Luntz was invited to join the Club and a few weeks later another business men's Club (all non-Theosophists) engaged him as speaker on the same subject.

Thus Astrology, supposedly *anathema* to "hard-headed" men of business, finds ready acceptance when adequately presented and attracts some of those same business men into a Theosophical Lodge hall to listen to the far nobler truths to which Astrology is only an introduction.

On March 31st a free astrological lecture (one of three free lectures given each year by Mr. Luntz) drew an audience of 165: The subject of the lecture was, "This War and Your Horoscope: What Will It Do To You?" The collection was the largest of the year. Many new faces were noted in the audience. The St. Louis Globe Democrat, without solicitation sent a reporter who remained throughout the lecture.

It may seem rather monotonous to chronicle month after month an unbroken series of successful lecture activities—large crowds, large collections, new people attracted, new members joining. Yet these results are those which every Lodge strives for and which are supposed to be almost unattainable in the T. S. because "the people just won't come."

This particular lecture happened to be on Astrology, but the attendance has been almost equally as great at the Theosophical lectures. Hardly ever do we find that new people attracted by astrological lectures cannot later be drawn to the Theosophical lectures and classes. It cannot too often be reiterated that Astrology is only the first step. Theosophy follows as a natural sequence. Though to divorce the two is certainly not in line with the *Secret Doctrine*, which treats them both as one.

In St. Louis are thousands of people who know something of Theosophy because they first heard of it in a lecture ostensibly on Astrology. Would it have been better had they never heard of it? In St. Louis Lodge are numbers of earnest, hard-working members who contacted Theosophy in the same way. Objections to this beneficent way of using Astrology are as inexplicable to our members as objections to reincarnation are inexplicable to Theosophists. They just don't add up. And, as in the latter case, some day they will disappear.

"I smile at man,
Who labors solving the riddle of the universe,
Forgetting that the wisdom of the first atom
Undoes his utmost."
[To Be Continued]

BIRTH CONTROL

[Continued from Page 9]

forded them, and because it oftentimes happens that in the karma, or self-made destiny, of the rich, is provided a retribution such as will be experienced by the care of such children as these; for riches are sometimes but the materialization of efforts of criminal selfishness in past lives, and in a universe where Justice rules, and "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." It is never likely that one of these young souls will be born into a family that is honorably wealthy; that is, wealthy as the result of honest efforts in a past life or the present one.

So, from the higher point of view contraception is wrong. And I make bold to recommend to the devoted humanitarians who are advocating and teaching it, and to whom all should do honor for their wonderful self-sacrifice in this cause which they believe to be right, and which is obviously right in some of its phases, notably that of preventing birth through the diseased and the defective, that they study the teachings of reincarnation and karma and ponder the whole matter carefully. If they be converted to the broader view, there is much for them still to do, in the matter of superfluous and the unwelcome children of the poor.

This brings us to a consideration of the remedy. It is simply, perhaps, that the State become the foster-parent of such children, or of any children that the parents will part with, and also that the State contribute to the support of large families held together by affection but suffering from enforced poverty, in the shape of outright gifts or of loans to be repaid by the family within a period of years, loans generously administered and based upon legislation designed to maintain the highest degree of self-respect in the recipients. I contemplate benign State institutions for children, of course, pleasantly named and circumstanced and in charge of well-paid experts fitted by nature for this wonderful work of mothering and teaching and training.

And do you ask: What of the suffering of the hard-working, unwilling wives, if a knowledge of contraception be denied them? I can but reply that, if they be married to uncontrolled men and wish to retain them and to prevent them from seeking degrading liaisons, they must consider their sufferings as a part of their general ill-fortune and seek to bear them with sweet stoicism. As a matter of fact, the sufferings are but a portion of their self-made destiny, their karma, and no one is to blame but themselves. Divorce much more easily and less expensively obtained is one avenue of relief from intolerable conditions of this sort; and I would sentence female opponents of easy divorce to even one month's life with an obnoxious spouse of the sexually brutal kind, and male opponents, I will add, to even a fortnight's sojourn with a nagging, cantankerous wife—for only thus, it seems, may reasonable views of mismatings be developed in such opposers of legal separations.

But I would add that a widespread knowledge of contraception among the uncon-

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OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

Infantile Mortality Among
the Patriarchs

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

Following the death of Noah, we are startled by the shrinkage in age expectancy of the succeeding generations. So marked was this that, as compared with their venerable ancestors, Noah's posterity almost might be said barely to survive infancy. Their precocity, too, was amazing.

Thus whereas no self-respecting antediluvian became a father before the age of 65, and usually waited until after turning the century mark to perpetuate his family, we find mere babes in their thirties "begetting sons and daughters."

True, Noah's eldest son Shem decently waited until he was a hundred before siring little Arphaxed, who was born two years after the flood. Arphaxed's young hopeful, Salah, however, saw light when his father was only 35, while Eber, Shem's great-grandson, appeared on the scene just 34 years later.

The effects of these early marriages began to show themselves in the premature cracking up of the new humanity. Thus while Shem achieved the respectable total of 600 years, Arphaxed succumbed at an untimely 438. His son and grandson also died in their four-hundreds but his great-grandson, one Peleg, passed away at the shockingly curtailed age of 239.

This established a new par and subsequent generations carried on the Pelegian tradition by dying about the middle of their third century. Then came Abram's grandfather, yclept Nahor, who shattered all previous low scores by giving up the ghost at 148.

Superficially it would seem (and has seemed to the scoffers) that the Biblical chronologist was extremely anxious to get the ages of these ancient people down to a workable basis before he started the detailed history of their lives. It is hard work enough to dig up incidents to fill an average longevity of 70 or 80 years, but to maintain reader interest over a period of 700, 800, 900 or more is obviously an impossible task. Imagine a biography of Methuselah from cradle to grave, covering 969 years. No prehistoric Boswell could do justice to so long-lived a Dr. Johnson. Wisely the bearded Boswells of the day confined their efforts to the mere statistics. If Methuselah ever did anything of greater consequence than beget sons and daughters, the Bible is silent upon such activities.

But the time was approaching when the new method of giving facts regarding the intimate doings and journeyings of the characters had to be undertaken. The unwieldy ages must go—ploughed under by the wheels of progress. So say the mockers, and their views are plausible if one knows nothing of the esoteric fashion of constructing narratives.

Actually, the explanation is far different. Next month it will be unveiled.

[To Be Continued]

OCCULT STUDY OF DISEASE

[Continued from Page 9]

ignorance of the law. So if we study the pain on its inner side, we learn wisdom. We discover that all actions which are based upon unity, motivated by love, produce health, because they are in accordance with the fundamental principle of Nature, which is that there is but one life of which we all partake. All actions based upon separateness produce ill health and pain because they are attempted transgressions—attempted violations of that fundamental principle.

This is true of nations as well as of individuals. No nation can injure, exploit, or oppress another nation without paying the full penalty. Very soon after her Congo atrocities came the German invasion of Belgium. England, after her colonizing depredations, lost a million or more men in the World War. America, after centuries of oppression of the Indians, lost tens of thousands of men in the War.

We must know of this law before we can understand human life on earth and more especially the problem of health and disease. That is why I preface these articles by a brief exposition of it.

Let us now look at the law in operation in the production of disease.

The ideas which I am going to express are the outcome of a study of many hundreds of different cases of disease by means of the faculty of positive clairvoyance. In each case the physical history was obtained and a psychological study was made of the individual. The etheric double and the emotional and mental bodies were examined and their condition recorded. In many cases an attempt was made to investigate the past life of the individual and to discover the transgression from which the disease karma originated. By these means there is being gradually built up a number of classification of disease states, showing the psychology, the type of transgression and the superphysical conditions corresponding to certain of the chronic diseases.

The work is necessarily incomplete and imperfect, partly because of the limitations of the author and also because it was interrupted by his visit to America, but it will go on and in the end we shall have a complete classification of all the major diseases.

[To Be Continued]

A just peace there certainly must be, if another and if possible an even worse debacle is not to come about in the next quarter century. But any peace which left the nation which twice started a world conflagration in position to do it a third time would certainly not be just to the rest of the world.

THE BODILY ZODIAC
IN THE POETS

1.—Aries

Heavenly blessings without number
Gently falling on thy HEAD.

—Watts.

ANTI-REINCARNATION ARGUMENTS

[Continued from Page 9]

them to be checked up by events and localities.

As a matter of fact that has been done (which is more than the annihilation theory can lay claim to). But with what result? The skeptic continues to declare, "I don't believe it. There is some other explanation. It's coincidence."

Think the reincarnation theory through. Don't look at it and turn away. Don't prejudge the case. Don't feel that because you are a professor in a leading University, or a pillar of the Church, or one who always accepts conventional ideas and never anything out of the way, that therefore you *must* assert your disbelief of reincarnation, just on general principles. If your mind is closed to reincarnation that is your affair, but it does not disprove reincarnation.

If you want proofs, read any one of the scores of Theosophical books which have been written on the subject. Subsequent articles of this series will bring out many of them. But the best proof of all is to look about you. If reincarnation isn't true and we only get one chance each at a life on earth, what a reflection that is on the intelligence of the Supreme Intelligence, who has provided a world with material for experience which not a thousand lives could exhaust, and then sends each of us here just once to partake of it!

We have a higher opinion than that of the Directive Intelligence of the Universe—and if we did not, we imagine that It would have a not very high opinion of our own intelligence which could so impugn It.

To prove reincarnation to one's own complete satisfaction, it is only necessary to compare reincarnation with all competing theories. They are poor feeble things, without strength or substance, as against the magnificently logical belief that reincarnation affords. To those who dispute this, we say, with utmost respect, "You would not dispute it if you had thought it through with unbiased mind." Reincarnation sweeps aside every other *credo* of survival by sheer power of its inherent truth. It is because it ought to be.

Next Month's Objection: If you say you hang a man on circumstantial evidence, don't forget men *have* been hanged on circumstantial evidence and later proved innocent.

In another column are half-a-dozen alleged verses, "Sanity in Art," which express some strictly personal views on the subject. Recognizing that art is not intended to be photographic, we still have often wondered: (a) Why, in modern art, limbs, torsos and features must so often be drawn to defy every anatomical rule? (b) Why the saints of the middle ages either were represented as in the last stages of malnutrition or in the early stages of diabetes? (c) Why modernistic painters persist in strewing odd limbs about their pictures—an arm here, a leg there, a fist in this corner, a couple of toes in that—for no apparent reason. Our ignorance is colossal, but, as Rosa Dartle used to say, "We merely ask to know."

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCIENTIFIC ASTROLOGERS

Has This To Say About Mr. Luntz's New Book

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE BY ASTROLOGY

In the Bulletin of this organization for March the following review appears:

"The author, Charles E. Luntz, is well-known for his work in connection with Astrology. In this splendid book he has written in a most practical and straightforward manner on a subject about which too little REAL information has been published. In simple straightforward manner, he sets forth definite rules to be followed in sequence and applies these principles to numerous horoscopes of well-known people. Later he expands upon these rules, showing how to use them in various contingencies of actual practice. Case histories and data are furnished. This is definitely the type of book which sets high standards and is a credit to astrology in every respect.

"Mr. Luntz is a writer of wide experience on astrology, the editor of a magazine carrying astrological material, and leader of the Theosophical School of Astrology in St. Louis. In addition, from his rich personal experience in applying astrology in the work of actually hiring people, he has placed practical data on Vocational Guidance in such form as to be available to all. He indicates how to use the chart to determine the right time for applying for a position; how the employer can use astrology in securing the proper employees; and other practical manners of usage. Every student of astrology can use this book to advantage and astrological counsellors and teachers, can also find it an invaluable aid. Get it!"

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NO RESULTS

[Continued from Page 11]

commended by Dr. Arundale, are referred to the monthly Lodge news appearing in these columns regarding the activities of The Theosophical Society of St. Louis, which has no difficulty at all in interesting the public in large numbers, not only in the "side-issues," but also in the straightest of straight Theosophy.

BIRTH CONTROL

[Continued from Page 14]

rolled young seems dangerous, for obvious reasons.

So, to all devoted advocates of birth-control I most earnestly urge reflection upon the matters thus presented, and I recommend to them the endeavor to secure legislation for the care of these children as outlined, to

provide for the training of all children in self-control and self-respect through knowledge wisely communicated, to seek the State-aid mentioned for love-cemented families, and to insure for expectant and actual mothers, and for the children that remain in the homes of the perennially poor, the best of medical care and sympathetic attention.

A subtle and very useful question was propounded to us recently. Where does faith end and gullibility begin? That is a nice point. A snap answer should not be given—it is a question to be meditated upon and prayed over. Readers' views are solicited and to start the ball rolling we would hazard that one cannot believe too profoundly in the innate principle of goodness pervading the Universe. No gullibility there. Belief in any principle of evil is gullibility.

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It will be noted these are inner beliefs. Beliefs based on the assertions of others must always be subjected to the inner test otherwise they become mere credulity. Oliver Wendell Holmes insisted that man has never believed half enough. We are inclined to believe him.

It is a grave error to sneer at the views of a layman on a specialized subject, whether it be art, music, literature, or even Theosophy. Most of the people are laymen—there are only a few specialists. There must of course be those who are experts, connoisseurs, able to judge. But the collective judgment of intelligent laymen, if it be conceded that a layman can be intelligent, is more likely to immortalize great work than the collective judgment of the experts—some of whom may have their own particular axes to grind.

A Society for "Sanity in Art" has been formed to resist the present trend toward the morbid, the grotesque and the unintelligible. We know little of art but the movement has our blessing, such as it is. The proponents of the right of the artist to cover the walls of our art galleries and museums with these monstrosities insist that the artist must be allowed to express what is within him. They claim that these freakish caricatures and obscurities are an aspect of reality. One is reminded of Shaw's epigram, "The inside of a sewer is doubtless an aspect of reality but I have no desire to see into one." Such "art" is unwholesome and pathological. There is no health in it and it will not endure. More power to the "Sanity in Art" group!